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Translated for this Journal.

## An Opus II.

By ROBERT SCHUMANN. (1831.)

The other day Eusebius stepped softly to my door. You know the ironical, inquiring smile upon that pale face of his. I sat with Florestan at the piano. Florestan, as you know, is one of those singular musical men, who anticipate as it were beforehand all that is future, new, extraordinary. But this time a surprise awaited him. With the words: "Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!", Eusebius unrolled a piece of music. We were not allowed to see the title. I fingered over the leaves in a listless manner; there is something fascinating in this muffled enjoyment of music, without sounds. Besides, it seems to me, every composer has his own peculiar note-forms for the eye: BEETHOVEN looks differently upon paper from MOZART, somewhat as JEAN PAUL's prose looks differently from GOETHE's. But here I felt as if actually strange eyes, flower eyes, basilisk eyes, peacock's eyes, maidens' eyes, looked marvellously at me. In many places it grew lighter—I thought I saw Mozart's *La ci darem la mano* entwined through a hundred chords; Leporello seemed to leer at me, and Don Juan in white mantle to fly past me.

"Play it," suggested Florestan. Eusebius consented; squeezed into a window niche, we listened. Eusebius played as if inspired, and conjured innumerable shapes of the most living life before us: it seems as if the inspiration of the moment sometimes lifts the fingers above the usual measure of their power. The entire response of Florestan consisted, not to speak of a certain blissful smile, in nothing but the remark, that the Variations might be something by Beethoven or FRANZ SCHUBERT, if you could imagine them

to be piano-virtuosos. But when he looked at the title page, and read simply:

"*La ci darem la mano, varié pour le Piano-forte par Frédéric Chopin, Œuvre 2,*"

and we in our astonishment exclaimed: "An Opus two!" and when our faces glowed with uncommon surprise, and besides a few interjections there was little to be distinguished, except: "Yes, this is again something rational—CHOPIN—I never heard the name—who can it be? at all events a genius—was it not Zerlina laughing there? or Leporello?"—really there arose a scene, which I cannot describe. Heated with wine and Chopin and much talking, we went off to Master Raro, who laughed a great deal and showed little curiosity about the Opus 2. "I know you of old," said he, "and your new-fangled enthusiasm—but bring the Chopin here some time." We promised to do so the next day. Presently Eusebius bade us quietly good night; I stayed a while with Master Raro.

Florestan, who for some time had had no abiding place, flew through the moonlit streets to my house. About midnight I found him in my chamber, lying on the sofa, and his eyes closed. "Chopin's Variations," he began, as if talking in a dream, "are still going round in my head. Certainly," he continued, "the whole thing is dramatic and sufficiently Chopin-ish; the Introduction, complete as it is in itself—don't you think of Leporello's thirds?—seems to me the least suited to the whole; but the Theme—why has he written it in B flat?—the Variations, the Finale and the Adagio, that is really something—there peeps genius out of every bar. Naturally, dear Julius, Don Juan, Zerlina, Leporello and Masetto are the interlocutors,—Zerlina's answer in the Theme shows her sufficiently in love; the first variation might perhaps be called somewhat *distingué* and coquettish—the Spanish grandee flirting very amiably with the young peasant girl. This is self-evident in the second, which is already much more familiar, comical and disputatious, as if two lovers were spiting one another and laughing more than usual. But how all is changed in the third variation! All now is moonlight and fairy magic; Masetto, to be sure, stands in the distance and curses pretty audibly, but Don Juan does not let that disturb him much. But now for the fourth, what do you think of that?"

"Eusebius played it quite purely—does it not leap out boldly and bravely and go right at a man? although the Adagio (it seems to me natural that Chopin repeats the first part) plays in B flat minor, than which nothing could be more appropriate, since in its beginning it warns us as it were morally of Don Juan. It is naughty,

indeed, and yet how beautiful, that Leporello listens behind the bushes, laughing and joking, and that oboes and clarinets stream forth with such magical enticement, and that the full blooming B flat major so precisely indicates the first kiss of love. But all that is nothing to the last movement—have you wine still, Julius?—this is the entire Finale in Mozart—leaping champagne corks, ringing glasses, Leporello's voice in the midst of all, then the clutching and pursuing spirits, Don Juan running away—and then the conclusion, which ends in a beautifully tranquilized and real manner."

Never before, so ended Florestan, had he had a similar emotion to that awakened by this close, except in Switzerland. And that was in those beautiful days, when, as the setting sun climbed higher and higher up the highest mountain summits and finally the last ray vanished, there came a moment in which one seemed to see the white Alp giants close their eyes. One only feels that he has had a heavenly vision. "Awake thou also to new dreams, my Julius, and sleep!" "Dearest Florestan," replied I, "these private feelings are perhaps praiseworthy, although they are somewhat subjective; but however little of definite design Chopin may have had in these inspirations of his genius, I bow my head likewise to such genius, such effort and such mastery." Whereupon we went to sleep.

JULIUS.

## New Views of Opera.

[Extracts from RICHARD WAGNER's "Opera and Drama," as translated by the London Musical World.]

### II.

The constitution of music has developed itself in two directions in the branch of Art fixed by it, and known as Opera: in a *serious* direction—through all those composers who felt the weight of the responsibility which fell to music, when it assumed for itself alone the aim of the drama—and in a *frivolous* direction, through all those musicians, who, impelled by the instinct of the impossibility of solving an unnatural problem, turned their backs upon it, and, thinking only of enjoying the advantages that opera has gained from uncommonly extended publicity, gave themselves up to an unmixed system of musical experimentalizing. It is necessary for us, in the first place, to contemplate more nearly the former, or *serious*, side of the question.

The musical foundation of Opera was, as we know, nothing more than the *air*, while the latter, again, was the national song introduced by the singer to the aristocratic world, with the words left out and supplied by the production of the poetical artist engaged for the purpose. The development of the national melody into the operatic air was, next, the work of the vocal artist, no longer interested in the rendering of the melody, but in the exhibition of his artistic skill; he determined the resting points necessary for him—

self; the change from the more lively to the more moderate expressions of song, and the passages where, free from all rhythmical and melodic constraint, he could, to his heart's content, display his skill alone. The composer merely arranged the materials for the virtuosity of the singer, and the poet, again, did the same for the composer.

We must firmly impress upon our minds these original relations of the artistic factors of the opera to each other, that we may, in what follows, perceive how these distorted relations became more and more confused from all the efforts to set them right.

From the luxurious craving of noble lords after variety in their amusements, the ballet was added to the dramatic cantata. The dances and the dance-melodies, as arbitrarily taken from the national dance-tunes as the operatic air was from the national song, allied themselves, with the coy inability of coalition inherent to everything unnatural, to the influence of the singer; while, by this heaping-up of elements totally destitute of anything like inward connection, there naturally arose for the poet the task of binding together in a combination, brought about anyhow, the display of all the artistic capabilities spread out before him. A connecting dramatic medium, which became more and more evidently a necessity, now joined, with the help of the poet, that which in itself really required no such connecting medium, so that the aim of the drama—impelled by outward necessity—was simply *given*, but by no means *taken up*. Vocal and dance melodies stood, in the coldest and most complete solitude, near each other, for the display of the singer's or dancer's skill, while it was only in what should, at a pinch, connect them, in the musically recited dialogue, that the poet exercised his subordinate influence, and that the drama was at all apparent.

Nor did recitative arise in opera, as a new invention, from a real impulse towards the drama; long before this speaking style of song had been introduced into opera, the Christian Church had employed it for the recitation of Biblical passages. The cadence which, in these recitations, soon became, in obedience to the precepts of the ritual, stationary, and common-place; only apparently, not really, any longer speaking, and rather indifferently melodic than expressively conversational, was next transferred, but also modelled and varied by musical caprice, to opera, so that, with the air, dance-melody, and recitative, the whole apparatus of the musical drama—absolutely, as regards its constitution, unchanged down to the most recent opera—was definitely fixed. The substance, too, of the dramatic plots serving as a foundation for this apparatus, soon became stereotyped; mostly taken from the totally misunderstood Greek mythology and hero-world, they formed a theatrical scaffolding deficient in all capability of exciting warmth and sympathy, but which, on the other hand, possessed the faculty of presenting itself for the use of every composer, to be treated according to his peculiar views, and thus we find that the majority of these texts have been set to music again and again by the most dissimilar musicians.

GLUCK'S revolution, which became so celebrated, and which has been wafted to the ears of many ignorant persons as a complete distortion of the views commonly taken until then of the constitution of opera, really consisted in the mere fact of the composer's revolting against the caprice of the singer. The composer, who, after the singer, had especially attracted the attention of the public, since it was he who always provided the singer with fresh materials for the display of his skill, felt himself injured by the singer's influence in exactly the same proportion that he was desirous of fashioning the said materials after his own creative phantasy, so that his work, and perhaps only his work should, at least, strike the hearer. Two roads were open to the ambitious composer, for the attainment of his end; either to develop the purely sensual substance of the air, with the assistance of all the musical means at his command, as well as of all those to be afterwards found, to the highest and most voluptuous

fullness; or—and this is the more earnest way, which we have now to pursue—to restrict all caprice in the execution of the air, by an endeavor on the part of the composer to impart to the tune to be executed an expression suitable to the accompanying verbal text. If such texts were, in conformity with their nature, to have the value of the feeling conversation of acting personages, feeling singers and composers must long previously have thought of stamping their virtuosity with the necessary degree of warmth, and Gluck was assuredly not the first composer who wrote passionate airs, nor were his singers the first to sing such airs with expression. But that which makes him the starting point for what is, decidedly, a most complete change in the previous position of the artistic factors of opera to each other, is: that he enounced with consciousness, and on principle, the appropriate necessity of having both in air and recitative an expression in keeping with the accompanying text. From this period, the preponderating influence in the arrangement of the opera passes, most certainly, to the composer: the singer becomes the organ of the composer's intention, and this intention is, with full consciousness, enounced, in order that the dramatic substance of the accompanying text may be satisfied by being truly expressed. The only thing, in fact, attacked, was the unbecoming and heartless desire of the singer to please; but, in all other respects, everything relating to the completely unnatural organization of opera remained exactly as before. Air, recitative, and dance-music, each completely separate, stand as causelessly by each other in Gluck's operas, as was previously the case, and is so, almost always, even at the present day.

In the position of the poet towards the composer, not the slightest change was made; the position of the latter towards him had in fact become rather more dictatorial than before, since, after enouncing the consciousness of his more elevated task—with regard to the vocalist—he carried out, with more naturely weighed zeal, the arrangements in the construction of the opera. The poet never thought of mixing himself up at all in such arrangements. \* \* \*

But it was Gluck's successors who first thought of taking advantage of this position of theirs for enlarging the forms they found ready to their hand. These successors—among whom we must comprise the composers of Italian and French origin, who, shortly before the conclusion of the last, and at the commencement of the present, century, wrote for the operatic theatres of Paris—imparted to their songs, with a more and more complete degree of warmth and truth of immediate expression, a more extended formal foundation. The old established divisions of the air, still retained in their essential characteristics, were fixed upon more varied motives, and even transitions and connecting passages drawn into the domain of expression; the recitative joined involuntarily, and more closely, the air and even entered as a necessary expression into its composition. The air, however, gained an important degree of expansion from the fact that more than one person—according to the dramatic exigencies—took part in its execution, and that thus the essentially monological characteristic of the old opera was advantageously lost. It is true that pieces such as duets and trios had been long previously known; but the fact of two or three persons singing together in an air had not fundamentally produced the least change in the character of the air, which, in the melodic plan and maintenance of the thematic tone once adopted—which tone did not exactly refer to individual expression, but to a general specifically musical disposition—remained quite the same, nothing being really changed in it, whether performed as a monologue or as a duet, except what was perfectly material, namely: the fact of the musical phrases being sung alternately by different voices, or by all together, by a simple harmonic contrivance, such as two or three voices, etc. To indicate this specifically musical element, so far that it might become capable of vivaciously alternating individual expression, was the task and work of the above mentioned composers, as is evident in their treatment of the so-called *dramatico-musical en-*

*semble*. The essential element of this *ensemble* always remained in truth simply the air, recitative, and dance music; only, whenever, in the air or recitative, a vocal expression, corresponding to the text-foundation, was once acknowledged as a fitting exigence, the truth of this expression logically and of necessity had to be extended to whatever dramatic connection was contained in the text-foundation. From the honest effort to satisfy this necessary consequence, arose the extension of the older musical forms in opera, as we find them in the serious operas of Cherubini, Méhul, and Spontini. We may say that, in these works, is fulfilled what Gluck wanted, or may have wanted—yes, in them is attained, once for all, whatever natural, that is to say, in the best sense of the expression, consistent qualities could be developed on the primitive foundation of opera.

The youngest of the above three masters, Spontini, was so perfectly convinced of having really reached the utmost limits of operatic style; he had so firm a belief in the impossibility of his productions ever being, in any way, surpassed, that, in all his subsequent artistic efforts, which he published after the works of his great Parisian epoch, he never made even the slightest attempt, in form or meaning, to go beyond the stand he had taken in those works. He obstinately refused to recognize the subsequent, so-called romantic, development of opera as anything but an evident decay of opera; so that, on those, to whom he afterwards communicated his ideas concerning this subject, he necessarily produced the impression of a person prejudiced, to madness, in favor of himself and his own works, while he really only enounced a conviction, which could very easily be founded upon a perfectly sound view of the constitution of opera. On surveying the deportment of modern opera, Spontini could, with justice ask: "Have you materially developed, in any manner, the musical component parts of opera in any greater degree than what you find in my works? Or have you been able to effect anything intelligible or sound, by really going beyond this form? Is not all that is unpalatable in your productions simply a consequence of stepping out of this form, and have you not been enabled to produce all that is palatable simply within this form? Where, now, does this form exist more grandly, broadly, and comprehensively than in my three great Parisian operas? Who, however, will tell me that he has filled out this form with more glowing, passionate, and energetic substance than I have?"

It would be difficult to reply to these questions of Spontini in a manner that would confuse him, but, in every case, still more difficult to prove to him that he was mad, if he held us to be so. Out of Spontini's mouth speaks the honest voice of conviction of the absolute musician, who gives us to understand: "If the musician will, by himself, as arranger of the opera, bring about the drama, he cannot, without in addition exposing his utter incapacity, go one step further than I have gone." In this, however, there is involuntarily expressed the demand for something further; "If you desire more, you must apply, not to the musician, but to the poet."

But how did this poet stand with regard to Spontini and his contemporaries? With the whole growth of the musical form of opera, with all the development of the capabilities of expression contained in it, the position of the poet was not in the least changed. He always remained the preparer of foundations for the perfectly independent experiments of the composer. If the latter, through successes obtained, felt his power for freer movement within his form increase, he only set the poet the task of serving him with less fear and anxiety in the supply of subjects; he said to him, as it were, "See what I am able to accomplish! Do not trammel yourself; trust in my activity to resolve your most hazardous dramatic combinations, body and bones, into music." Thus was the poet merely carried along by the musician; he must have felt ashamed to bring wooden hobby-horses to his master, when the latter was able to bestride a real steed, for he knew that the rider understood how to handle the



reins bravely—the musical reins, which were destined to guide the steed hither and thither in the well-levelled operatic riding-school, and without which neither musician nor poet dared to bestride it, for fear it might spring high above the inclosing fence, and run off to its wild, magnificent nature-home.

The poet thus certainly attained, by the side of the composer, increasing importance, but only exactly in the proportion that the musician ascended before him, while he merely followed; the strictly musical possibilities alone, which the composer pointed out to him, were all that the poet thought of, to serve as his standard for arrangement and form, and even for the choice of a subject; he remained, therefore, with all the reputation which he, also, was beginning to gain, only the mere skilful person, able to serve the "dramatic" composer so suitably and well. Immediately the composer himself took no other view of the relative position of the poet, than that which he derived from the nature of opera, he could only regard himself as the responsible factor of the opera, and thus, with right and justice, retain the position assumed by Spontini, as being the most suitable, since he could procure himself the satisfaction of producing in that position, all that was possible for a musician, if he wished the opera, as musical drama, to preserve its claim as a valid form of art.

[From Putnam's Magazine.]

### ROBERT OF LINCOLN.

BY WM. CULLEN BRYANT.

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,  
Near to the nest of his little dame,  
Over the mountain-side or mead,  
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name,  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,  
Hidden among the summer flowers.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gaily drest,  
Wearing a bright black wedding coat;  
White are his shoulders and white his crest,  
Hear him call in his merry note—  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Look what a nice new coat is mine,  
Sure there was never a bird so fine.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,  
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,  
Passing at home a patient life,  
Broods in the grass while her husband sings  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear  
Thieves and robbers while I am here.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;  
One weak chirp is her only note.  
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he;  
Pouring blasts from his little throat—  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Never was I afraid of man;  
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,  
Flocked with purple, a pretty sight!  
There as the mother sits all day,  
Robert is singing with all his might  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Nice good wife, that never goes out,  
Keeping house, while I frolic about.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell  
Six wide mouths are open for food;  
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,  
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
This new life is likely to be  
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.  
Chee, chee, chee.  
Robert of Lincoln at length is made  
Sober with work, and silent with care;  
Off is his holiday garment laid,  
Half-forgotten that merry air,  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
Nobody knows but my mate and I  
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.  
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;  
Fun and frolic no more he knows;  
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;  
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes,  
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,  
Spink, spank, spink;  
When you can pipe that merry old strain,  
Robert of Lincoln come back again.  
Chee, chee, chee.

### Verdi's New Opera.

[Correspondence London Musical World.]

The long-expected, oft-announced, incessantly-rehearsed opera, *Les Vêpres Siciliennes*, has at last been produced at the Grand-Opéra. Its production was attended with considerable success—a success attributable to four causes, which I place in order of merit: 1st, The admirable manner in which the music was interpreted by Mlle. SOPHIE CRUVELLI and most of the other artists; 2d, the *mise-en-scène*, which left nothing to be desired; 3d, the inherent interest of the subject of the libretto; 4th, the music which Sig. VERDI has composed to illustrate that subject. Beginning at the fourth clause, Sig. Verdi, in my opinion, has written no work containing more beauties or greater defects; *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* resembles a mosaic, in which two artists of unequal merit have been employed. A *murceau* of elegant design and elegant execution is interwoven with another, coarse in conception and deficient in finish; want of harmony consequently pervades the whole, and the very beauties themselves mar the perfect success of the work, by bringing more prominently into notice the deficiencies to which they are allied. At times, the music is graceful, elegant, and sweet, suited to the situation it illustrates, dramatic in character, and admirable both in design and execution. But scarcely has the public expressed its approbation, and the hum of applause barely ceased, ere your ears are dinned with some stunning chorus shouted in unison, some air taxing the capabilities of the most stentorian lungs; or your sense of musical and dramatic propriety is outraged by music altogether alien to the situation, and unsuited to the scene. The second act of the *Vêpres Siciliennes* is probably the best which Signor Verdi has yet composed. It is full of beauties, and contains little to criticize. When the curtain fell at its conclusion there was a general shout through the house for the composer, who was led on the stage by Mlle. Cruvelli; where he received the ovation which he had justly merited. *O! si sic omnes!* In the very next act occurs the most important and dramatic situation of the opera. An entry of conspirators, an attempt to assassinate the governor, a separation between two lovers, and a father's preservation by his son, have supplied Signor Verdi with no better inspiration than a worn-out polka worthy of M. Alary, and ludicrously discordant with dramatic exigencies and propriety. Although Signor Verdi has achieved success, he has made no advance in his art, but, on the contrary, has produced a work which as a whole, is unquestionably inferior to *Rigoletto* and *Il Trovatore*. I will now proceed from generalities to details, and, as M. SCRIBE has, in a note at the head of his "*livret*" declared that "the general massacre known under the name of the 'Sicilian Vespers' never took place"—an assertion leading one to suppose that M. Scribe places historical truth on a level with that of his

own fictions—I will give a short account of the Sicilian Vespers which form the subject of the present opera.

It was in the year of grace 1282 that these events occurred, which constitute one of the most tragical episodes in the world's history. Charles of Anjou had delivered the island of Sicily into the keeping of governors, whose cruelty and rapacity were inhuman even in those dark ages. The people were ground down by taxes and imposts, barbarously beaten, deprived of their wives and daughters by the lust of a brutal soldiery, and confined in dungeons such as still exist in the island, for the immurement of those who have offended King Bomba. The nobles were humiliated and disgraced, their daughters deprived of their wealth and confined in convents, when they refused to marry some chosen one among the governor's needy adventurers, while the executioner found constant employment in branding, maiming, torturing, and murdering, those who proved refractory, or revolted against the tyranny to which they were subjected.

The entire population groaned under the yoke imposed on them, and thirsted for vengeance. On the afternoon of Easter Tuesday, the 31st of March, 1282, the people repaired to vespers at the church of the Saint Esprit, about a mile from Palermo, to celebrate the third day of Easter. The church was filled to overflowing, and those who were excluded from its walls formed themselves into groups on the adjacent grass or in the neighboring gardens. "Mirth and youthful jollity" everywhere prevailed, and dancing and singing were the order of the day. A few of the French soldiers constituting the garrison joined the fair dancers, whose lips they pressed and whose waists they encircled in that free and easy manner so natural to the Gauls, but so likely to lead to "explanations" when the owner of the pressed lips or encircled waist revolts against such familiarity. Accordingly a murmur passed through the group of Palermitan bystanders, whereon the soldiers added jeering to insult. Stones were thrown, and, on the troops defending themselves, knives, daggers, and hatchets were soon brought into play. A scene of terrible carnage then commenced, with shouts "Death to the French." The butchery, at once begun, was continued for the space of a whole month, and during that period a number of Frenchmen were put to death, by some historians estimated at 20,000, by none at less than 10,000. John of Procida was among the most active leaders in this revolt, and his name and exploits, forming the theme of many a poem and romance, have now been celebrated by MM. Scribe and Verdi in the opera of *Les Vêpres Siciliennes*.

The curtain rises on a scene representing the great square of Palermo, with French officers and soldiers drinking and singing in chorus. Presently the Duchess Hélène (Mlle. SOPHIE CRUVELLI) sister of the late Duke Frederick of Austria, crosses the stage with her attendants, returning from church. The duchess is detained as a hostage at Palermo, and laments her brother murdered by the Governor. The soldiers demand a song to enliven them; Hélène—like Marcel in the *Huguenots*—at once complies with their request. She accordingly sings a cavatina replete with life, energy, and movement, stirring the blood in the veins of her Sicilian hearers, who with loud shouts repeat the refrain, and draw their daggers to attack the French. There is but one opinion as to the manner in which Mlle. Cruvelli delivered this air, and all critics, whether friendly, hostile or neuter, have united to sound her praises. Just as the fray is about to commence, Guy de Montfort, Governor of Sicily (M. BONNEHEE), appears, and his dreadful presence at once calms the excitement.

No man dares speak, save one, and that man is Henri (M. GUEYMARD), a young Sicilian, the natural son of the Governor by a native of the island, whom he had seduced and abandoned some twenty years before. This youth is unacquainted with the secret of his birth or the name of his father, and has joined John of Procida (M. OBIX) in his conspiracy against the French domination. He is beloved by Hélène, who is in

equal ignorance of his paternity. He braves the Governor, who dismisses Hélène and all the bystanders. "Serve in the French camp," says the Governor, who dearly loves his unacknowledged son; "it is your only chance of safety." "I will not." "You refuse; then death must be your fate." "I care not." "Meanwhile, nevermore see Hélène." "I fly to her," says Henri, and the curtain falls on the first act.

The second opens with a charming scene, in a smiling valley near Palermo, with the chapel of Sainte-Rosalie on an eminence in the distance. John of Procida is alone, moody and thoughtful. He expresses his sensations in an air, *O mon pays, tant adoré*, which is interrupted by a chorus of bass voices behind the scenes. They shout, "Death to the French, new life to their country," and, as the voices die away, Procida resumes his interrupted song, which concludes with a *stretta*, quick, rapid, and admirably in keeping with the situation. M. OBIN sang this air to perfection, and fairly divided the applause with the composer. Hélène arrives, recognises Procida, and they unite their voices in hope for the deliverance of their native soil. Procida departs to add fuel to the flame commencing to burn among the people, and Henri is left alone with Hélène. He discloses his love in a charming duet, exquisitely sung by Madlle. Cruvelli, and to which M. Gueymard also did full justice. A passage on the words *Moi! qui simple soldat*, which forms an accompaniment to, and embroidery on the theme sustained by Cruvelli, called down thunders of applause, and the whole duet is graceful, elegant, and charming. But alas! the course of true love never did run smooth; an officer arrives, who forms an unwished for addition to the lovers' tête-à-tête, and who bears an invitation for Henri to the Governor's fête. He refuses with disdain, and is carried off captive. He bears with him the antidote of love to the bane of imprisonment, for Hélène has promised her hand, if he will avenge on the French the death of her murdered brother.

Procida returns, preceding the conspirators and friends, who have united to celebrate the fête of Sainte Rosalie. Sicilian dancers, tarentellas, &c., follow in rapid succession.

The French soldiers are long espied the happy groups, and, throwing themselves into the midst, carry off the girls best suited to their taste; an outrage they commit in broad daylight, and in presence of their assembled relatives. Stupor, indignation, and rage, succeed each other in rapid order; the people give way to their passions in a chorus well suited to the scene, and when the voices of all, gradually increasing in volume, have arrived at the very climax of indignation, the chorus is interrupted by an *ensemble* of the principal singers on the words, *Ils frémissent enfin, et de honte et de rage*, which produced an admirable effect, and was much applauded. In the midst of these tumultuous cries, comes an air wafted over the waters, "in sounds by distance made more sweet." The enraged populace listens to the song, and presently beholds a boat freighted with gallant Frenchmen, and noble dames, who, escorted by bands of music, are proceeding to the Governor's fête. At the sight of their foes the passions of the mob are roused to violence, and, whilst from the boat proceeds a strain of sensuous music, voluptuous and love-inspiring, the stage re-echoes to the rude and impassioned chorus of the angry conspirators. This double chorus is united by the composer with rare skill, and the effect was tremendous. The curtain fell to shouts of applause from all parts of the house, and Signor Verdi—after long resistance to a call which would admit of no denial—was at length led before the curtain by Madlle. Cruvelli, to receive the applause which the beauties of the second act had fairly won for him.

#### Diary Abroad.—No. 17.

BERLIN, June 3.—Again settled in my little room, through the windows of which the notes of a thousand sparrows—are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?—and the air, fragrant from the gardens below, come with their soothing influences! The temptation is strong

upon me to throw aside books and papers and wander off in the cool shades and by the still waters of the leafy Thiergarten. There I might hear Nature's music; the sighing of winds in the pines, the gentle rushing of brooks, the clear notes of thrushes, finches, and possibly, nightingales. Oh, it makes me half a hater of Republicanism to visit almost any European city and compare its public grounds, shady with trees, brilliant with flowers, offering each lover of stillness and solitude hidden recesses of thickest foliage, with the patches of ground, which some of our cities have had the conscience to reserve to the public.

But to-day I must write. What quantities of matter have been accumulating during the last weeks! It must be transferred, in part, to paper some time, and what little freshness is left is fast fading. In part—for if all were written out it would go no small way toward filling the new edition of Blank's works in forty volumes, 8vo. But let me go back to—

April 22.—Was it not Judge Marshall, who interrupted the lawyer with, "Brother So-and-so, there are some things which a Chief Justice of the United States may be supposed to know"? So there are some things which the musical reader may be expected to know; among them the remarkable preface to one of his works, which was written by that great German composer, who, learned in all the wisdom of the Italian and French schools of his day, struck out a new path, and waged war against them; inextinguishable, until they were extinguished. The principles which GLUCK—whose biography has been so mangled by Fétis—announced in the preface to *Alceste*, first triumphed in Vienna, and after the elevation of his pupil, Maria Antoinette, to the throne of France, and Gluck's re-appearance in Paris consequent thereupon, accomplished a more renowned if not a greater triumph there. Of all Gluck's works in the Italian style, we never hear a note. His German works—though written perchance to Italian or French words—are among the highest efforts in music. So it was with MOZART and HANDEL. Their early works are forgotten. Gluck passed away and MOZART, CHERUBINI, BEETHOVEN—great names—WINTER, WEIGL, and others of less note, followed, disciples of the author of *Orpheus*; and the influence of this, the true German school, is traceable in every work, come from where it may, which during this century has been successfully put upon the stage. How direct and vast the influence, which those years passed by the young ROSSINI in Vienna, where he heard the classics of our great Germans, especially Beethoven, exerted upon his style! What a gulf between the *Di tanti palpiti* music of his early works and those grand things on which his fame may safely rest as one of the greatest geniuses that have written! The influence of Rossini upon the later Italian school, is another of those things which the musical reader is supposed to know. Thus Italy gave music to Germany,—Germany has returned the gift with noble offerings of gratitude.

Well, Gluck laid down certain principles, which may however be summed up in this: Music in opera is to be employed only as a means of expression to the actor, and of exciting the sensibilities and passions of the audience; it is to be there, not for its own sake, but to heighten the effect of the drama as a whole. Hence when one, who has heard only the modern Italian operas, with their set airs and concerted pieces, their roulades and rhythmical riddles, comes to hear Gluck, the music seems to him a most extraordinary mixture of recitative and melody. The main thing heretofore at the theatre was to hear this or that singer sing this or that famous song; as a drama the opera was little or nothing. Now he is all afloat; recitatives run into melodies, melodies into recitatives. Concerted pieces are few and never written to display the singers. The music does not, somehow, satisfy him, so he at length gives his attention to the dramatic action upon the stage—wanders with Orpheus through Orcus into the Elysian fields; mourns with Iphigenia or shares the wrath of Achilles; becomes more and more interested—finds his sympathies touched in an entirely new manner, and shares as he never shared before in the jubilee of the final joy. Of the dramatist he thinks highly,—of the composer, he confesses his inability to see wherein his greatness lies; he did not think much of the music. By and by a light breaks in—it was the unostentatious, the modest clothing, which

the composer had given to the drama, which so powerfully wrought upon him. Now he sees the greatness of Gluck. According to the principles laid down in the *Alceste* preface, the poet, the painter, the decorator, the costumer, the composer, and the ballet master are all equals; each doing his own peculiar work and laboring, all, to the one end and aim of producing a drama, which shall be as real to the grown up and cultivated spectator, which shall command his sympathies and affect his heart, as did the dramatized nursery tale, when a child, he laughed and wept at the Christmas pantomime.

This principle must commend itself to every thinker. If the music be the only thing—if the drama be nothing, as many seem to think,—let us separate them, give the drama to the stage and the music to the concert room. MEYERBEER, a slow and laborious composer, is governed by the same principle, and all the ridicule or argument in the world cannot convince me that he has not had, in his way, a certain degree of success, so long as I feel at "The Huguenots" or "The Prophet" how appropriate and touching are his combinations. He is no Mozart, we all know.

Mozart's perennial fount of melody, from which Rossini and others have drunk so largely, was what probably no other composer [Handel?] ever possessed. And here is just that wondrous something in which Mozart is alone and beyond all other composers for the stage. He never fails of having fully at command both modes of musical expression; the melody is the melody for his text, and the harmonic combinations are just as exquisite. Most composers are deficient in the one or the other. Our recent writers of one school give us polka, waltz or galop melodies, with harmony beneath contempt; those of the other school, learned and labored harmonies, which are tedious unto death for the want of the life-giving soul of melody. The difference in the result is that polka dancers sustain the one a few nights, and learned old fogies the other. A season passes away and the operas have disappeared like the leaves of autumn.

BEETHOVEN in his one opera placed himself at a single step with Mozart and Gluck. *Fidelio* is the most wonderful first dramatic work ever written. What might we not now have had from his pen, if the Directors of the Opera in Vienna in 1807 had accepted the proposals he made them! Who that knows *Fidelio*, the dramatic music in the "Ruins of Athens," the *Adeleide*, and his two or three scenas, and the *Christus am Oelberg*, must not mourn at the sad mistake made by the powers that were! Had he been called upon to devote the necessary time and study to vocal writing, Gluck and Mozart would not have stood as they now do, like Saul, "from his shoulders and upward higher than any of the people." I think VERDI was intended by nature for a composer, but I am afraid the genius given him,—like girls kissing each other,—is decided waste of the raw material. All this, and ever so much more of the same sort, better or worse, passed through my mind last night at the performance of "Tannhäuser."

[Having written thus far, I went down to hear and see "Don Juan" again. The Anna was Fraulein TIEDJENS from Vienna,—a tall, beautiful, noble-looking young woman, a good actress, and endowed with a fine, clear, flexible voice. She has but to Italianize her name into Signora Tidien-niny, to come over and make as great a sensation in our country as that German girl, Fraulein DEUTSCH did a few years since under the name of TEDESCO; or as Sophie CRUVELL of Bielefeld is now doing in Paris with a *li* at the end of her name. The Zerlina was TUCZEK, now Frau HERRENBURG, excellent except at times oppressed with "wiggles," but allowance is to be made for an increasing weakness of the chest. How grandly this opera is here put upon the stage; it would do OULIBICHEFF's heart good to see it. For instance in the ball room scene, not a note of music comes from the orchestra; some thirty musicians, in three bands, play the minuet upon the stage, and the music grows fast and furious until, at Zerlina's scream behind the scenes, that strangely effective burst of discord from the orchestra depicts stronger than words the confusion and dismay of the dancers. So too in the graveyard scene, the statue of the Commander utters his awful tones to the unearthly sounds of an accompaniment which comes from the tombs—the orchestra is silent; and you must sympathize with the terror of Leporello—it is terrible,



and so was the entire finale. How true is the instinct of genius! I was admiring again the other evening the fine art of Shakspeare in placing the comic scene, where Lenox and Macduff wake up the porter, just before the discovery of Duncan's murder—what a ghastly contrast! Just this effect is gained by the music in the supper scene, which precedes the entrance of Don Juan's awful guest. I was just mourning that Beethoven wrote no more for the stage; I now mourn that Mozart had none of the fine texts which have been wasted upon—better not call names. Yes, "Don Juan" is, musically considered, the greatest work ever put upon the stage.]

To return to *Tannhäuser*. I need waste no words upon a description of this drama, its successive scenes, the story and so forth; all this is on record in Dwight's Journal, better than I can do it,—I shall therefore simply record the impressions left upon the mind after hearing it for the first time, and that unluckily at the close of a day of fellowship and communion with an old and very unmusical acquaintance, 'yclept Sick Headache.

Impression 1. While Mozart, Cherubini, Beethoven and their school adopted Gluck's views, but still made the texts given them—and this lay in great measure in the character of those texts—more subservient to their purposes than did their master—the musician being far greater than the poet—the music therefore far greater than the poetry, oftentimes separable from it, most numbers being beautiful musical creations in themselves—WAGNER, on the other hand, is endeavoring to carry out Gluck's principles to their fullest extent. Having made the effects of single chords and musical phrases his special study, he throws overboard all the *impedimenta* of the musician and looks upon himself only in the light of dramatist; but a dramatist, whose verse shall be heightened in its stage effect not merely by the rules as given by Hamlet, but by all the power which lies in musical sounds,—not necessarily tunes.

Impression 2. That in *Tannhäuser* he has not fully accomplished this; the march for instance, the choral of the pilgrims, and some other portions being "regularly composed" music.

Impression 3. That one sees clearly by this work, that a drama in which the principle is carried out fully in every line, nay, in every word of the text—as it is said to be in *Lohengrin*—if successfully executed, would be appreciable and of interest even to the common auditor. For after the first feeling of strangeness was worn off, the musical clothing of the words would no more be thought of than the rhetorical inflections in the voice of a good actor, and yet like those inflections stir up the very foundations of the soul; and indeed in a still higher degree.

Impression 4. That, as a drama, *Tannhäuser* is faulty in the want of sufficient rapidity of action, in making too much of mere scenic effects, in the want of a due gradation of increasing interest to a grand culminating point in the finale; and in making the springs of action of too refined and delicate a nature to admit the necessary broad masses of light and shade.

Impression 5. That this may still be regarded as a work full of soul, and a remarkable argument by way of example, in favor of Wagner's theory.

Impression 6. That the author of *Tannhäuser* is not a very great dramatic poet, nor a very great composer; yet that this opera must rise to a high place in public estimation and become a stock piece on the German stage; but that it can never be given in any other language, nor indeed be fully clear to an auditor who cannot to a certain extent feel the force of the words of the text—those words which sprang from the mind of the composer already clothed in musical tones.

Impression 7. That when Dame Nature gives the world a man in whose single brain are lodged the genius of Shakspeare and the genius of Mozart, that man will be able fully to satisfy all the demands of Wagner's Theory, and his works will be the highest efforts of human intellect for the stage. But Opera, Drama,—what will they be?

May 2.—Heard this evening as performed by the Breslau Sing Akademie, with the operatic orchestra, FREDERIC SCHNEIDER's *Weltgericht* ("Last Judgment").

What a bore!

May 5.—Professor STENZLER of the University—a Sanscrit man—is also a fine musician. He told me an

anecdote which MENDELSSOHN told him. When the great composer was a boy of twelve years and studying with ZELTER, the latter brought out various works of BACH, or at all events rehearsed them in the Sing Akademie (of Berlin). Zelter was one of those all-knowing men, who can improve every thing, correct all sorts of faults, and so on. This he was in the habit of doing by the cantatas of Bach.

"Well, Felix, how did you like the cantata to-day?" Felix expressed himself on the whole not fully satisfied, though the work just sung was by Bach. On further questioning, he pointed out certain passages as seeming to him unequal to the rest and injurious to the effects.

"Pshaw! I wrote that myself," said the old egotist.

This afternoon, in the music hall of the University, Mozart's Requiem by the Sing Akademie. What a strange crotchet that was which crept into GOTTFRIED WEBER's head, that this was patched up by Mozart out of youthful works to a certain point and then finished by SUSSMAYER! Who can hear it without feeling it to be the work of Mozart, the dying man!

## Musical Chat-Chat.

JULIEN il Grande, of Crystal Palace memory, is expected in New York, with a new monster orchestra of unrivalled artists, early in August. It is said that he brings with him "a live tenor, the greatest in the world of course," and it is even hinted that it will be TAMBERLIK. But we have since learned that the recent conversion of Castle Garden into a depot for emigrants casts a doubt upon Jullien's coming to America. . . . The management of the Academy of Music, for the next season, has fallen, it is said, into the hands of Mr. ULLMAN, SONTAG's man of business. It is understood that he goes abroad immediately to engage an operatic troupe, and that his plan of operations is very large, and contemplates the furnishing of Boston and Philadelphia with opera simultaneously with New York, and the devotion of two out of five nights each week to German opera, as well as Italian. This plan ought to succeed. . . . We hear rumors of no less than three distinct German opera enterprises in New York this summer; one is already in operation at Wallack's theatre, where a performance of *Fidelio*, with Mlle. LEHMANN, as the heroine, is anticipated.

We had a pleasant visit this week from CARL BERGMANN and HERR ALBRECHT, of the Germania Society; both looking bright and well; the latter happy to his heart's content in his life among M. Cabet's colonists in Nauvoo, whither he intends returning after the summer reunion of the Germanians at Newport. Shall we not send for Bergmann to conduct the Ninth Symphony, when our Beethoven statue is inaugurated? and shall not that occasion be made musically a truly noble one, and give an impulse and a tone to all our musical affairs for the year following? . . . We understand that another statue of Beethoven is to be modelled by our young townsman, WILLIAM W. STORY, now in Europe, whose admirable full length statue of his father, the late Judge STORY, now adorns the anteroom of the Athenæum.

Mr. C. BREUSING, 701 Broadway, New York, has recently made a large importation of Roman Catholic choir music. It consists of easy masses, by Mercadante, father Lambillote, and other composers in modern style, *Ave Marias*, offertories, etc., by various composers. . . . Bergamo, the birth-place of DONIZETTI, has erected a monument to that composer. . . . A French paper (so translates the *Evening Gazette*) thus describes the habits and appearance of VERDI, now conducting his new opera, *Les Vêpres Siciliennes*, in Paris: "He goes but little into the world, and lives very privately with a few of the least excitable and most reflecting of his countrymen. He is about forty years of age, resembling in appearance the Germans rather than the Italians, with

none of the exuberance and excitability of the latter; on the contrary he is very silent, very much reserved, and rather uncivilized. His stern physiognomy, his light brown hair, his pale face and hollow eyes, his thin lips, all give to him a mysterious aspect, somewhat mitigated by his impassibility of manner. He visits no one, scarcely ever salutes his friends, seldom speaks, and is apparently lost in meditation. He is indeed a strange Italian!"

As a *bonne bouche* for 'Young Italy' we copy the following from a New York paper, which in enumerating the operatic prospects of the summer, concludes with: "And, we believe, there is a 'German silver' sort of an opera somewhere in the city; but he who can fall back upon Dutch gutturals after the celestial music of the birds of Italy, can drink lager beer after a surfeit of sparkling champagne."

HECTOR BERLIOZ, says Willis's *Musical World*, thus merrily comments in the *Journal des Debats* on the engagement of the late queen of the Grand Opera, Mme. STOLZ, at Rio Janeiro: "So Madame Stolz returns to Brazil for 400,000 francs—and insurance against sea sickness—and six servants—and four poets—and eight horses—the gratuitous view of the Bay of Rio, night and day—cloudless sun—real enthusiasm—rivers of diamonds—scarfs embroidered by the hands of Marchionesses—turtle doves and negroes restored to liberty after each performance, without counting the free men who become enslaved!!! How was it possible to resist? But we should resist at least, and not allow our sky to be pillaged, and our stars carried off, by those men of the Antipodes, who have their heads upsidedown!"

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JULY 14, 1855.

### Popular Amusements.

The recent *Sängerfest*, or Singing Festival of the Germans in New York, carried its moral deeply home to many a thinking, would be true American. Especially in these times, when "Americanism" is set up as a sort of politico-religious idol, when we are exhorted to maintain a surly, jealous and exclusive attitude toward all foreigners, and to reject foreign influence, the example of so much faculty of innocent and wholesome self-enjoyment in a vast mass of foreign population, met for no end ostensibly but pleasure, and in the midst of such a feverish work-day world as ours, is one from which we may well take a lesson. We are glad to see that it has led many of the newspapers, of all parties, even the most ultra American, into a tone of reflection, which we trust will not soon be dropped. We have been too thoughtless of them. Divided between money-making and politics on the one hand, and religion without much of "the beauty of holiness" on the other—between a barren puritanism of correct deportment and its natural alternative of stupid, bestial indulgence, we have somewhat as a people lost the art of free, spontaneous, genial, happy life. We are an unhappy people; none the less so that we are more prosperous than others. Prosperity is the bugbear tyrant whom we serve as anxious bond-slaves, fearing to call one moment of our life our own, fearing to *live*, in our unceasing, feverish pursuit of the mere means of living.

We are an anxious people, uncomfortably demonized and ridden, night-mare-like, by that

which gives us power. We go ahead faster than others, but it is by a Centaur-like contrivance, by allowing so much of our real vital human Self to be absorbed into the lower animal, or the machine that carries us. Soon we shall cease to be men at all, we shall be so "fast." Your native American "live Yankee" wastes his life in rivalling a steam-engine; he makes himself a mere machine for generating power—power for what? And with what a solemn, pious, lean, hard-favored way he does it! With what a quasi-religious reverence he quotes his business maxims, his rules of principal and interest, and so forth! How he amalgamates unworldly orthodoxy with the most secular showman's cant in the advertising of his wares! How he practically confounds religion with his own selfishness, as generalized into prudential maxims!

Perhaps there are no people who put forth so much of will, so much of multifarious power as we; as there are certainly none who have so much political freedom, so much liberty and even license of opinion. And yet we have perhaps as little real freedom as any other. We are the slaves of our own feverish enterprise, and of a barren theory of life, which would fain make us virtuous to a fault, and substitute negative abstinence for harmonious positive living. We are sadly destitute of the spontaneous element. We are afraid to give ourselves up to the free and happy instincts of our natures. All that is not business, or politics, or study, or religion, we count waste. We have done it so long, that now we are like little children, unfit to be left to ourselves to enjoy ourselves together. Pleasure becomes intemperance with us; amusement, untaught, uninspired by higher sentiments, runs into the gross and sensual.

We lack *geniality*; nor do we as a people understand the meaning of the word. We ought to learn it practically of the Germans. It comes of the same root with the word *genius*. Genius differs from the other ruling principles of life by the fact that its methods are spontaneous. Genius is the spontaneous principle; it is free and happy in its work; it is a practical reconciliation of heartiest pleasure with the highest sense of duty, with the most holy, universal ends and sentiments of life. Genius, as BEETHOVEN gloriously illustrates in his Symphony, finds the keynote and solution of the problem of the highest state in JOY. Now all may not be geniuses, in the sense that we call Shakspeare, Mozart, and Raphael, men of genius. But all should be partakers of this spontaneous, free and happy method of genius; all should live childlike, genial lives, and not wear the marks of their unrelaxing business, or the badge of party and profession in every line and feature of their faces.

This genial, childlike faculty of social enjoyment, this happy Art of Life, is just what our countrymen may learn from these musical festivals of the Germans. There is no element of national character which we so much need; and there is no class of citizens whom we should be so glad to adopt and own as those who set us this example. So far as it is a matter of culture, it is by the artistic element that it is chiefly to be brought about. The Germans have the sentiment of Art, the feeling of the Beautiful in Art, and consequently in Nature, more developed than we have. Above all, Music offers itself as the most available, most popular, most influential, of the Fine

Arts: Music, which is the Art and language of the Feelings, the Sentiments, the spiritual Instincts of the soul, and so becomes a universal language, and tends to unite and blend and harmonize all who come within its sphere.

A clergyman in the interior of the state of New York, one of the earnest, devoted, truly pious sort, in a letter expressing his sympathy with our "Journal of Music" enterprise, writes: "I wish we could cultivate Music sufficiently among us, to make it, as it seems to me it might be, a great antagonistic to the baser passions and animal appetites of the people, and even to render unnecessary what we in this State have just begun most seriously to quarrel about, 'a prohibitive liquor law.'" There is the true philosophy of temperance. Privation is not temperance. Prohibition may be even as great an evil as intemperance. It is but the fatal, fruitless, hopeless oscillation from one unnatural extreme to its opposite. The prohibition scheme leaves out the free, spontaneous, genial element of all true social life. You ask for bread, it gives you the bitter stone of a factitious morality. What makes men intemperate is the innate craving for excitement, for joy, for a free, happy feeling of some sort, and the blind rushing to the cheapest means thereof in order to escape the barrenness and tameness of their drudging, sober lives. If you would weaken the temptation to intoxicating drink, you must give the people other, wholesomer excitements. Teach them the art of enjoying themselves, like the Germans. Teach them to love Music. Kindle in them an artistic enthusiasm. Make their lives æsthetic; arm them with resources, not merely of the serious, intellectual and moral, but of the spontaneous and genial sort. Then the good things of this earth, the wine that maketh glad the heart, &c., will not have to be preached and theorized and voted and legislated out of all right to existence, in order that they may cease to be dangerous to natures to whom God has made them really congenial. Then men may drink and may enjoy and be as glad as little children, and yet none the less be men, self-possessed and erect in all the dignity of manhood. They tell great stories of the quantities of *lager-bier* drank at that German festival. Nine thousand dollars' worth, it is said, on the one day of the pic-nic! Yet no disorder, not one person drunk! It was a great sum to consume in that way. It would have gone far, invested in some permanent works or means of Art; it would establish the best kind of concerts in a city for the year round; it would place a noble organ in a Music Hall; it would purchase the finest collection in the world of casts of all that is valuable in the antique sculpture; endow a library, or what not. We say nothing of the economy of the thing. Our citizens would throw away as much any day in some mere formal, pompous political celebration, which means nothing, or burn it away in senseless fire-crackers; any amount do they willingly spend in noise and smoke, only without the joy, without the real heart's good that the German finds in his *lager-bier* and song. For to them the beer is a symbol, as well as the song. There is a sentiment about it. And it were well worth ninety times nine thousand dollars, could we imbue our people with that same kind of genial social feeling.

But we must keep space for the following pertinent remarks about the German festival, which

we have saved up from the *Courier and Enquirer* of June 27:

There is not the slightest indication of any utilitarian purpose in the assemblage. It was neither political, nor commercial, nor religious, nor benevolent. Its object was not directly or indirectly to make any man greater, or richer, or better, except so far as man is made either or all of these by the hearty enjoyment of simple and innocent pleasure. Could any thing be more un-American! Here were men from the various towns and cities of the New England and Middle States who had left their business to come on here only to spend three or four days in walking, crowned and garlanded, in procession, in singing and the enjoyment of athletic sports. Men, not boys; hard working, sober men, not idlers and rowdies. What could be more un-American! \* \* \*

And yet Germans as a nation are at least no less thoughtful, no less thrifty than Americans. Boast as we may of our system of education, there are more cultivated men among the merchants and mechanics of Germany than among the corresponding classes in this country; while in general thoughtfulness and devotion to the study of the great social, political, scientific, or literary questions, Germany is very far beyond us. The Germans who come here, always bring more or less money with them, and they are among the most thrifty and prosperous of our population. Yet they find much time—all of them, in fact, the exceptions being very rare—for mere innocent pastime, having for its only objects recreation and pleasure. \* \* \*

Our joyless aspect has been so long noticed that it has become a national trait by which we are described and recognized. It was well said that if there be less misery in the United States than in other countries, there is also less happiness. We toil to live, and live to toil. All of us do it, rich as well as poor. If a man choose to retire from the world altogether, it is well; he can do so; but, whatever his wealth, if he remain in the active world at all, he feels that he must work as if he were working to keep himself and his family from starvation. He is on the swift tide of affairs, and he must ride upon it and rush on with it, or be overwhelmed and cast upon forgetful shores. We go about with anxious faces; we think of our business as we walk; it is with us when we lie down and when we rise up: it consumes us, body and soul. Great nervous energy—in which we surpass all other nations,—enables us to endure fatigue and accomplish great things; but our physical type has degenerated; we as a nation have less of that beauty which results from vigorous health and finely balanced organization, than any other composed of the higher races; and after our feverish toil or our feverish pleasure is over, we collapse at once into inertia, torpor, a repulsive taciturnity which almost amounts to moroseness. Able to put forth on occasion at least as much physical or mental strength as any other people, and having that perseverant determination which makes us continue our unflagging labor as long as body and soul will hold together, we have yet less elasticity of muscle and of mind than any other nation. We rush fiercely on to a certain end and there drop, successful but exhausted winners of a victory that brings us no joy; unless, indeed, it opens the road to another; when by some mysterious process our exhausted energies are at once recruited, and we plunge again into the struggle with unabated vigor. We have strength and spirits for work, but none for the serene enjoyment of quiet and homely pleasures.

Perhaps it is hopeless for us to attempt to live another life. Inexorable nature may possibly have doomed us to this existence of joyless toil that we may, machine-like, work out her great problem in this age and in this country. But this does not appear. There is no reason for believing that we would achieve less if we looked more like men with a smiling heaven above our heads, and a glad earth beneath our feet. We need not work less if we played more. The constant and systematic interruption of our toil by innocent recreation—not reading and lecture-hearing, and other "intellectual" employments, but hearty, homely amusement—has actually become to us a great national want. More than any other teaching, we need to be taught to be happy; and could we get a lesson from our German friends, their visit would win them yet a warmer welcome.

#### Letter from Leipzig.

JUNE 20.—Eight days in Leipzig have gone by like a dream—though the American delegation there is composed, by no means, of a dreamy set of fellows; at all events I have not found them so. They "dig" a good portion of the time, and if after dinner it is



thought fitting to have a little fun over a cup of coffee—for that is the beverage, whose business is it? And here's to the American delegation at Leipzig!

What strikes me most here is the musical atmosphere in which the musical students live. I cannot say that the professors here surpass everybody else,—for instance I am inclined to place DEHN of Berlin, before HAUPTMANN or RICHTER of Leipzig, as a theorist—but that is not the point. Attention here is kept always upon the business of learning music; the entire musical man is cultivated. KELLY of Providence, and WILSON of Springfield are devoting themselves mainly to composition and the organ; but at the same time acquiring a familiar acquaintance with music in all its branches and in all styles.—PRATT of Boston devotes himself to the cultivation of his fine barytone voice, but when he gets back to Boston he will be found not a mere fine singer, but a man of musical knowledge, and high culture in other departments than singing alone. He will be found unrivalled, I think, in the execution of the deep soul-full songs of SCHUBERT and his school. Once a week the pupils of the Conservatory meet in the hall for music. At those which I attended we had stringed and pianoforte quartets and trios, sonatas, solos on instruments, songs, arias, German, Italian, and indeed from all schools, all executed by the pupils. Sometimes they are called upon to give their own compositions, and thus everything is done that can be done to lay broad, deep and secure a general musical cultivation. For instance; GOESCHEL, one of the finest singers in Germany, a most beautiful tenor, is vocal professor. I have been particularly pleased at the course he pursues with an American pupil—Miss JENNY BUSK. She is still quite young, not over fifteen or sixteen, and is endowed with one of the finest, clearest, most bird-like voices I have heard, and of a compass beyond anything I ever heard. Three several times she sang clearly and distinctly *four octaves*, the last time ascending the scales, through the whole twenty-nine notes! Here then is an organ of musical expression most rarely found, and one that must be dealt with most gently and carefully, especially just at this period of life. Accordingly the mere practising of vocal exercises is made to be but a small part of her musical education. She is called upon to devote a good portion of her time to the study of Italian, German, &c., a foundation is laid by bringing her into other classes in the Conservatory; so that when the time comes for devoting herself entirely to her vocal studies she will have that culture, that artistic mental development, which will give soul to all that her astonishing voice shall execute. I have great hopes of this young Baltimore lady.

What I rejoice at most when in Leipzig, is to see how, without any special effort to lead the pupils in any one direction, where nothing is said of Italian and German schools,—at any rate, where there is no quarrelling about them, and where they are fully and fairly represented, this general cultivation results in the formation of a taste true to the really great in music as the needle to the pole. It is the fashion of course in Leipzig to praise BACH, and to go into ecstasies over BACH's music. But fashion alone could not call out such audiences and chain their attention so, as one sees there on Saturday afternoons, when the Thomas School boys sing their two motets in the church. These are not always by BACH, by any means, but when they are by him, one sees the unmistakable signs of an approval founded upon appreciation.

Why, says one, a year or two since I thought the half of *Dwight's Journal* the trashy offspring of pre-tenacious prejudice, and the talk about classical music all humbug. Now my highest ambition is to do something, no matter how little, or with how much labor and pains, to make the folks at home capable

of sharing the world of musical enjoyment, which is now mine, but of which a year or two since I had no conception.

Another says, he really don't know what he shall do when he gets home. He expects the people will "make a row" if he gives them true organ playing, but he means "to put it through."

There are so many opportunities also to hear the greatest singers and instrumentalists, each in his or her own peculiar music and style, that a pupil of the Conservatory learns involuntarily to feel the true from the false and meretricious. A. W. T.

**CORRECTION.**—Our attention has been called to two misstatements in the communication week before last, signed "First Division," on the subject of our Military Bands. First, the New York Band and the Boston Brigade Band were spoken of as equal in numbers; whereas the former really numbered 22, and the latter 18 instruments. Secondly, the band which played on the last day of the parade, was *not* the Brigade Band, but some other. We do not suppose the writer meant to injure the reputation of the Brigade, or any other band, but we cheerfully make the corrections.

The above was intended for last week's paper, but crowded out by press of matter. We have since received a pleasant letter from the musical director of the "Boston Brass Band," who informs us that to that band belongs the credit of the *Felsenmühle* overture at the circus, as well as of the good playing on the Common on the evening of the Fourth, referred to in our "Chit-Chat." We are glad to hear it; glad to know that we have two good bands instead of one. We doubt not we have more. We have found no fault with the musicians who compose our bands; we have not said they were not masters of their art; and certainly it is no fault of theirs if the fashion of the day demands *all brass*, and if the military economies do not encourage the formation of large bands. Our quarrel is only with the principle (or rather fashion) of exclusively brass music, (a quarrel in which we doubt not many members of our bands sympathize fully with us); the only end of our remarks has been to arouse attention to the desirableness of bands composed as formerly of both reeds and brass, and numerous enough to be effective in summer evening concerts in the open air.

To this end we suggested, that a large band of this kind might be organized, either by private enterprise, or under the auspices of the city, more particularly for civic celebrations, processions, &c., including music on the Common:—a band for musical, rather than for mere military ends. With the military side of the question we have nothing at all to do. Of course, if small companies of fifty will have bands on their parades, they must be limited in number, and it is no fault of the musicians if they band their instruments together "in quantities to suit purchasers." Yet why not train in larger combinations? Why not have one "regimental band" (we think they call it), as in New York, which also would be available for music without muskets! But as to the military requirements in the matter, it is not for us to dictate or suggest; since, from our peace point of view, we really see no reason why the "pomp and circumstance" of war should ever clothe itself in music; the more "calathumpan" the accompaniment, the more in character, it would seem.

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